

| WATCH COMMITTEE PAPER |                            | WATCH/2009/4       |            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Meeting date:         | 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2009 | Open Govt. Status: | Fully Open |
| Type of paper:        | For Discussion             | Paper File Ref:    |            |
| Exemptions:           |                            |                    |            |

## WATCH COMMITTEE

### Potential for WATCH Contribution to Consultation Processes

#### Issue

1. The question has been posed by WATCH whether or not the committee should participate in consultation processes or comment on the work of other organisations relevant to its Terms of Reference.

#### Timing Considerations

2. Routine

#### Recommendation

3. WATCH is invited to consider the issues noted in this cover paper and to respond to the actions in paragraph 13.

#### Background

4. At the February 2009 WATCH meeting a member informed the committee that this issue had emerged in the context of an on-going review within HSE of the future role of committees such as ACTS and WATCH, particularly now that WATCH is the only committee or working group under the umbrella of ACTS which meets regularly. In this context it was asked whether some of the roles formerly held by other groups under ACTS should now fall to WATCH. Also, the member suggested that WATCH may consider responding to consultation exercises being conducted by Scientific Committees or other initiatives, within the UK, EU or wider internationally.

5. The committee discussed whether WATCH should review and comment on such consultation documents and if so, how consultation initiatives could be identified and brought to the attention of the committee, whether the committee should prepare a collective response, or whether members should respond individually, timing issues and potential overlap with other UK committees.

6. Overall, members were supportive of the principle of WATCH responding to consultations and noted that ACTS would need to be consulted on the appropriateness of WATCH operating in this manner. An action was placed on the WATCH Secretariat to identify some examples of consultation documents for WATCH to reflect on at the next committee meeting in June 2009. Subject to approval by ACTS, WATCH would then embark on a trial run for a period of 6 months.

7. In the time since the February meeting the WATCH Secretariat considers that it has identified a good example to discuss as a representative case.

## **Argument**

8. The Interdepartmental Group on Health Risks from Chemicals (IGHRC) arranged a workshop for UK Government departments / agencies in April 2009 to consider 'Descriptive vs. Quantitative Risk Assessment of Genotoxic Carcinogens'. The concept note for the workshop is attached at Annex 1.

9. Although a consultation document was not provided, the WATCH Secretariat considers this as an example for WATCH to consider how the committee might have contributed to the IGHRC workshop and discussion of this topic.

## **Link to HSC Strategy**

10. This is a generic issue relating to the WATCH Committee's Roles and Responsibilities.

## **Consultation**

11. No wider consultation on the content of this cover paper has been undertaken at this stage.

## **European Context**

12. There is a potential link to WATCH's input to EU procedures or activities.

## **Action**

13. WATCH is asked to consider the example provided in this paper and to :

- i) Consider whether WATCH might have usefully contributed to the discussion of the IGHRC workshop.
- ii) If so, how could such a contribution have been provided, for example
  - should WATCH have provided the IGHRC Secretariat workshop with written views
  - should WATCH have provided the HSE delegates with written views
  - should one or more committee members have attended the workshop
- iii) should the views, either provided in writing or in person via workshop attendance, been the personal views of (an) individual committee member(s) or the collective views of the committee
- iv) If the later, how timing problems might have been overcome.

## **Contact:**

Nicola Gregg  
WATCH Secretariat

## **References / Attachments**

Annex 1 IGHRC Concept note for a workshop on :  
Descriptive vs. Quantitative Risk Assessment of Genotoxic Carcinogens